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TEXAS MIGRANT LABOR, THE 1965 MIGRATION.
GOOD NEIGHBOR COMMISSION OF TEXAS, AUSTIN

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THE CALENDAR YEAR 1965 WAS THE FIRST FULL YEAR IN WHICH NO BRACEROS WERE IMPORTED FROM MEXICO. CROP LOSSES OCCURRED IN SOME AREAS OF THE COUNTRY DUE TO LABOR SHORTAGES, HOWEVER, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS STATE THAT THESE SHORTAGES CAN BE AVOIDED IN THE FUTURE. THE MAJORITY OF TEXAS MIGRANTS LIVE IN SOUTH TEXAS AND APPROXIMATELY 95 PERCENT OF THEM ARE OF MEXICAN EXTRACTION. MOST OF THE OTHER FIVE PERCENT ARE EAST TEXAS NEGROES. THE MECHANIZATION OF COTTON HARVESTING AND THE EXPIRATION OF THE BRACERO PROGRAM HAVE CAUSED MORE TEXAS MIGRANTS TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE OF THE STATE. IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT 31,500 SCHOOL AGE YOUNGSTERS FROM TEXAS MIGRATED WITH THEIR FAMILIES DURING 1965. IN THE FALL OF 1963 THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY INSTITUTED SPECIAL SIX MONTH MIGRANT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN FIVE SOUTH TEXAS SCHOOL DISTRICTS. TABLES ARE INCLUDED WHICH SHOW (1) A BREAKDOWN OF MIGRANT FAMILIES BY AGE AND SEX, (2) STATES IN WHICH TEXAS MIGRANTS WORKED, (3) PRINCIPAL COUNTIES OF RESIDENCE OF MIGRANTS, AND (4) THE PERCENT OF MECHANIZED COTTON HARVESTING BY COUNTIES. ALSO INCLUDED ARE THE PROPOSED MIGRANT BILLS TO THE 58TH AND 59TH TEXAS LEGISLATURES AND A GLOSSARY OF TERMS. (ES)

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TEXAS MIGRANT LABOR

The 1965 Migration

The Good Neighbor Commission of Texas

RC 001591

TEXAS MIGRANT LABOR

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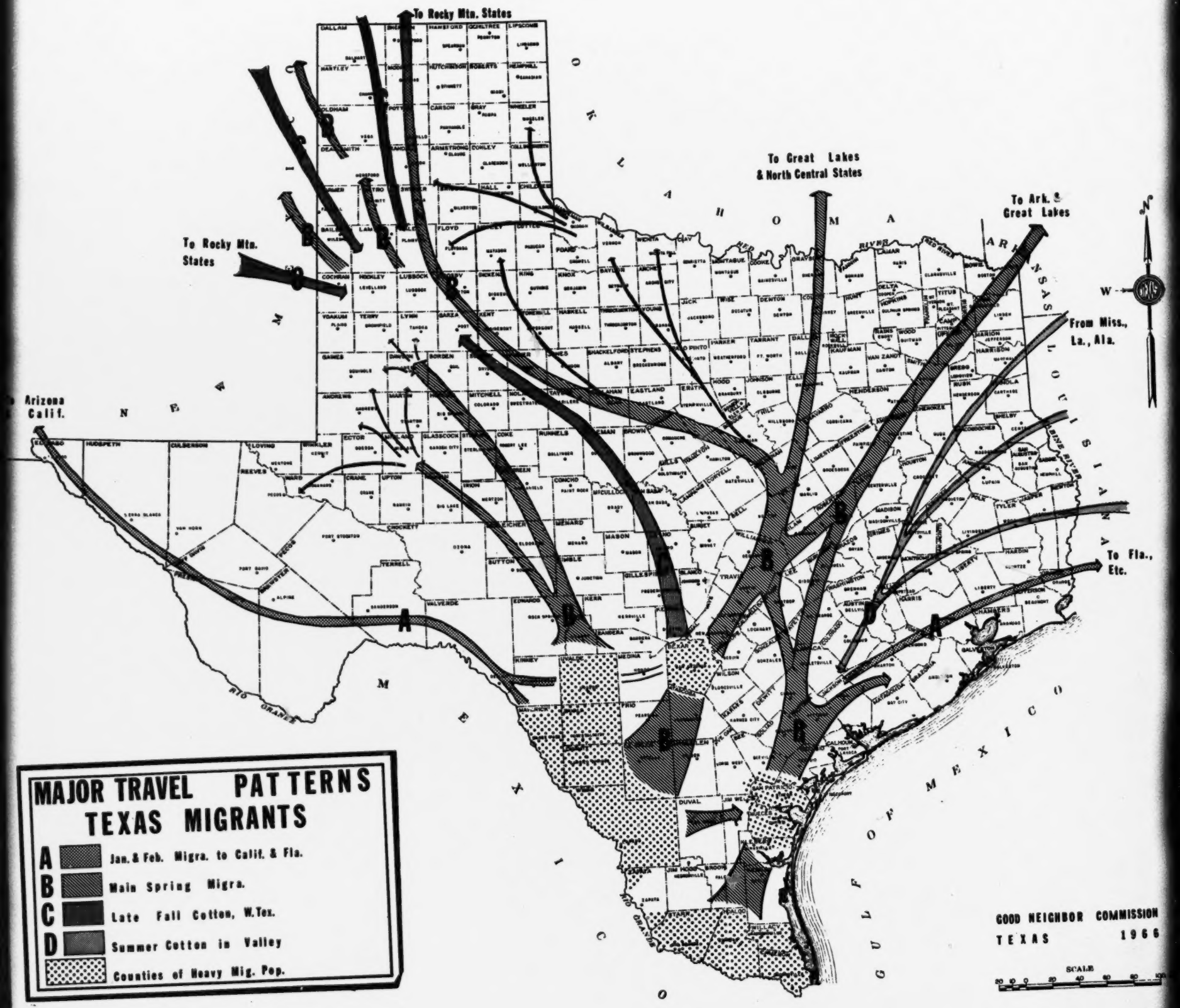
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MAJOR TRAVEL PATTERNS
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GOOD NEIGHBOR COMMISSION
TEXAS 1966
SCALE

TEXAS MIGRANT LABOR DURING 1965

AN OVERVIEW

General Aspects:

Considering the United States as a whole, the calendar year 1965 was the first full year in which no Braceros were imported from Mexico, and as such, proved to be a year of adjustment and transition. Although there were many areas and crops in which critical labor shortages were experienced, resulting in considerable strongly-voiced objection to the policies of the Department of Labor, American producers, on the whole, displayed great initiative, and by cooperating with the Government, proved that it was possible to harvest our crops without the large numbers of alien workers that in the past were considered indispensible.

The tradition of importing workers from Mexico to harvest our crops had actually persisted for almost a century, and the practice was greatly expanded whenever wartime conditions produced a scarcity of farm workers in the United States. In the early 1950's the practice was regularized by the conclusions of an agreement between the two countries under which the so-called Braceros were recruited, transported, and allocated to producers under strick regulations governing their working conditions, contract obligations, etc. Under Public Law 78--the "Bracero Act", as many as 460,000 workers were brought into the country in 1956, and about 445,000 in 1959. By the imposition of even stricter standards for authorizing the use of foreign labor by farmers, the number of Braceros had shrunk to 178,000 in 1964.

Public Law 78 was terminated on the last day of 1964, and no Braceros entered the United States during 1965. Some 20,000 Mexican alien workers were allowed to enter California, but these came in under Public Law 414 (Immigration Law) and were used only in certain critical crops for which no domestic workers had been found. Contrary to the expectations of many growers and officials, no really great catastrophic labor shortages developed, and there was no generalized, overall increase in the market price of most fruits and vegetables. Labor shortages in specific crops at critical times did occur, and these in some cases were attributed to the lack of Braceros. But in other cases they were probably as much the result of unpredictable weather conditions as to the

termination of the Bracero Act. Noteworthy crop losses that can be attributed clearly to labor shortages were those in the asparagus harvest and strawberry picking in California, and "pickles" in Michigan, while numerous less extensive shortages occurred in various local areas. But qualified observers and government officials have stated that there is every reason for confidence that during the current season these labor shortages can, for the most part, be avoided by timely and proper planning, plus intensified recruiting by the Employment Services and the growers themselves.

The objective for terminating the Bracero Act was to give more and better employment to our domestic farm workers. The improvement that actually took place in this direction during 1965 was significant, and the increase in the number of workers who responded to the new incentives surprised most observers. Wage rates in many areas and crops improved, while the active recruitment of domestic workers conducted by growers, plus the intensified efforts of the Employment Services to secure workers for all states and areas in which labor shortages existed or were anticipated, gave employment to many thousands of migrants who otherwise would not have found work. Thus the absence of competition from alien workers proved beneficial, particularly to the migrant workers and their families. Moreoever, as these workers become accustomed to the new situation, and the new travel and work patterns it has introduced into their lives, the results should prove even more beneficial to the workers as well as to their employers.

Insofar as Texas is concerned, the termination of the Bracero Act had, of itself, relatively little effect on our growers. Texas farmers had long foreseen that the alien workers would not always remain available, and had either made the change to mechanization, or had developed their ability to recruit and hold domestic workers for those crops not lending themselves easily to machine harvesting. Thus although labor shortages developed from time to time in specific crops, these were in most cases remedied before major crop losses occurred, and Texas growers, on the whole, were not too seriously affected.

Of greater impact on our growers was, and will continue to be, the intensive out-of-state recruitment that has been brought about by the new situation. Such labor shortages as occurred in Texas crops that had not previously lacked for workers were the result largely of the increased activities of out-of-state recruiters. Thus if from now on too many Texas workers leave to work in other states, Texas growers either have to pay wage rates sufficiently competitive to attract the workers, or the Texas agricultural economy will be seriously affected.

Insofar as our Texas migrants are concerned, the increase in the number that decided to migrate under the new conditions was considerably greater than had been foreseen, and appears to reflect the purpose of the new order. Altogether about 167,000 migrants, including men, women, and children, migrated during 1965. This is about 30 per cent more than in 1964, when about 129,000 migrated. The increase took place in all categories: men, women, children, families, etc. Of the total number who migrated, about 128,500 individuals migrated out of the state--the "interstate" stream-and about 38,500 remained entirely in Texas--the "intrastate"stream. These statistics are considered in detail in "Summary of Data" and "Trends In Migration".

The travel to other states will probably continue to increase during 1966 as more housing for families is constructed in California and other states that previously depended heavily on the Braceros, who being "singles", were quartered in barracks-type buildings. It can also be confidently expected that other states will intensify and perfect still more their methods of recruiting in Texas, since Texas has far more surplus farm labor than any other state. These developments attending on the cessation of the Bracero Act operate, of course to the immediate benefit of all our migrant workers, since even those that do not migrate to other states will, in the long run, receive higher wages in Texas than would be the case if there were less competition from other states.

Some early groups of our migrants left in January and February for Arizona and Florida, as in previous years. Many of these returned later and claimed that either the housing or the working conditions were not as promised; some from Florida complained of a lack of steady work. The great bulk of our migrants, however, commenced it. travel in April and May, as is usual. Last year Texas migrants worked in 36 states besides Texas; the three states employing the largest number of our migrants were, as usual, Michigan (31,681), Ohio (25,776), and Wisconsin (16,357). For additional data see "States in Which Texas Migrants Worked".

Many of the interstate migrants worked at least some weeks in Texas, generally in the cotton harvest in West Texas upon their return in late Fall. For most of them, return to home bases takes place from September through December; by Christmas the great majority are back in their homes. During 1965 more migrant families returned before or during the early part of September than has been the case in the past. This was to enable their school-age children to register in school at or near the beginning of the term, in keeping with the new school attendance law. Unfortunately, in various school districts of heavy migrant population, only about 20 per cent more than in previous years returned early.

Every year a small proportion of our migrants establish themselves permanently in other geographic areas, such as in West Texas or in northern states. Some thousands have settled in localities over a large area in and around Lubbock, for example. In many cases these have been able to secure permanent, year-around employment on farms, or in non-agricultural work, and have left the migrant stream. But home bases for the great majority continue to remain in South Texas, from San Antonio to the Border and to the Gulf. The heaviest concentration is in the Lower Rio Grande Valley; Hidalgo county has more migrants (25,000 workers) than any other county. About 95 per cent of Texas migrants are of Mexican extraction; the remainder are, for the most part, Negroes residing in East Texas.

Interested persons from other states often comment on the apparent anomaly of growers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley complaining of labor shortages, while many thousands of Valley farm workers travel to the Great Lakes area to find work. The explanation lies in the time factor: the migrants need long-term employment, and by leaving for the North in Spring, are afforded several months of gainful work before the cotton in the Valley is ready to pick. Thus when cotton and a few other crops need harvesting in the Summer, workers are at times scarce. At this time some hundreds of Negroes from Mississippi, Louisiana, and East Texas even find it profitable to travel to the Valley for work.

Recent Developments:

The recent development that overshadows all others in importance is, of course, the big increase in the number of families migrating as a result of the termination of the Bracero Act, already discussed. The new situation resulting from the cessation of competition from alien workers is demanding many changes in the travel patterns and other characteristics of our Texas stream. For example, some of the thousands of workers and their families who for years have looked primarily toward the Great Lakes states for their goal will now be travelling to California, as housing is constructed there. The wage rates are already higher on the West Coast than in any other area, averaging $1.40 and more per hour in 1965 (exclusive of room and board), compared to Texas' 93 cents per hour.

Since sufficient family-type housing did not exist in California during 1965, about 6000 "singles" were recruited in Texas by California labor agents, mostly from around El Paso and the lower Rio Grande Valley. These were, whenever possible, transported in buses, leaving their families behind. Since these singles, in the main, were contracted to one area in California and then returned to Texas by bus, they are not included in Texas Employment

Commission figures. In the sheet "States in Which Texas Migrants Worked" the total for California (9342) includes the 6020 sent out under Bureau of Labor Statistics licensing, plus 3322 recruited by the T.E.C.

The intensified out-of-state recruitment of Texas migrants that will from now on be the rule, makes it desirable to consider briefly how this is done. On the whole, it has been done legally, and in keeping with Texas law on the subject. Recruitment may be done through the Texas Employment Commission, which, among its many duties acts to assure as much steady employment as possible to our workers throughout the year, and attempts to secure adequate numbers of workers to satisfy the labor needs of producers in other states. Recruiting is also engaged in under the licensing system of the Texas Bureau of Labor Statistics, by which labor contractors post a $5000 bond, and pay a state occupation tax of $600, plus a $150 fee for each county in which workers are to be recruited, plus certain local fees exacted by the counties. In 1965, a total of 40,251 workers were contracted for out-of-state work by the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

But some illegal recruitment was engaged in during 1965, and evoked strong complaints from Texas growers, especially in the Valley. Often such illegal recruitment is difficult to discover, and more difficult to prove; the recruiter can transact his business with the crew leader on the other side of the Border, and in any case, the workers may not testify against the recruiter. Despite insufficient enforcement personnel, however, the Labor Commissioner has apprehended and fined a number of illegal operators during the past year.

Mechanization:

As is brought out in the study "Mechanization and the Texas Migrant", about 91 per cent of the Texas cotton crop was harvested by machine during 1965, the percentage varying according to region. Since there are now over 45,000 stripping machines and about 6500 picking machines in Texas, and most of the technical difficulties that hampered machine harvesting in the past have either been corrected or will be corrected as new refinements are developed in the machines, it can be expected that over 90 per cent of the entire crop will continue to be machine harvested in the future, given propitious weather conditions. If, however, heavy rains over large areas of the State make the use of heavy machines in the fields difficult and uneconomical, hand labor must be employed to a large extent, thus giving much-needed employment to the migrant workers.

Generally, with the improvement that has taken place in the harvesting machines, as well as in the new gin equipment that enables the ginner to produce a cleaner, better product with machine-harvested cotton, the cost per bale has been substantially lowered while the quality has improved. In most areas, if the prevailing wage rates for hand picking and hand pulling rise above a certain figure, it has today become cheaper to harvest entirely by machine, even taking into account the fact that machine harvested cotton is usually not of as high quality as hand harvested. As a result, great hardship has been caused the thousands of Texas migrants who for years depended on cotton for their main income.

Mechanization has inevitably forced some changes in the migration pattern of our Texas migrants, who can no longer count on finding work in some areas in the State where previously they were accustomed to securing steady employment. As an example, the traditional movement up through Central and North Texas after completion of the Valley and Coastal Bend harvests, has had partly to be abandoned because of the heavy use of machinery in that region. The migrants now either return to their homes after the Coastal Bend harvest, or migrate directly to West Texas or to Northern States. The interstate migration, as has been brought out, has greatly increased in recent years.

During 1965 the use of the machine in the cotton harvest is estimated to have displaced over 290,000 workers in Texas. Similarly, machine harvesting of vegetables probably displaced about 6,000. workers that formerly worked in those crops. Despite the fact that many localities in which vegetables are grown have available surpluses of hand labor, machine harvesting has made progress even in some vegetables; canning spinach, for example, is now 100 per cent machine harvested, sugar beets 100 per cent, bush beans 75 per cent, and carrots 25 to 50 per cent (See "Mechanization and the Texas Migrant".)

PROBLEM AREAS IN TEXAS MIGRANT LABOR

Although our Texas migrants have for many decades performed a vital role in the agricultural economy of this and many other states, there are many serious problems afflicting these workers and their families that require remedial action on a large scale. Texas has by far the largest number of migrant farm workers among the states, and the ills and disadvantages that beset migrant workers elsewhere in the country, are accentuated in Texas. Moreover the traditional problems that have long existed among this work force, have in recent years been further intensified by the realities of our present-day mechanized, technological way of life. Our migrants have been called the most disadvantaged major segment of the Texas labor force.

The average yearly income from farm labor of the migrant worker has been reported as less than $1000 over recent years, and every year it is becoming increasingly difficult for most of them to find steady employment. As a consequence, they must travel farther for fewer days of work. Since these workers are not generally skilled in other work and can not readily be absorbed in industry or the services, they will become under-employed to an increasing degree from now on. This, in turn, poses a serious problem to the Texas communities where they have their homes, as these communities are entirely unprepared to sustain, by themselves, the large numbers of unemployed with which they will be faced.

The previous section of this report has described the large increase in the number of Texas migrants that took to the crops during 1965 as a result of the somewhat improved situation regarding employment availability and wage scales resulting from the termination of the Bracero Act. But although the lot of the migrants has been, for the moment, improved by the absence of competition from alien labor, it is at best a temporary situation. It is only a question of time--a few years perhaps--until most of the work now performed by hand labor will be done by machine. Actually some of the major crops that in past years gave employment to countless thousands of migrant workers are already mechanized, either totally or in part. Among them are cotton, sugar beets, potatoes, beans, carrots, and even some fruits. (See "Mechanization and the Texas Migrant").

Many of the ills of the migrants are the result of basic, fundamental factors that can not be corrected in a short time, even if the efforts are made and the funds are available. The way of life of the great majority of our migrants has been characterized by poverty, lack of basic education both among the adults and the children, the prevalence of diseases and assorted ailments stemming from a lack of sanitation, health care, and knowledge of health rules, inability to speak English, and the general sub-standard mode of their hand-to-mouth existence. It is a vicious cycle that, to be corrected, must be attacked on a variety of fronts, and this requires time and perseverance. It is this unavoidable time-lag that gives concern to the agencies involved in programs to benefit the migrants. Mechanization will not wait, and if large numbers of migrants are not to be left completely unemployed and unemployable, their preparation for a fuller role in our economy and society must be undertaken now.

The establishment by the Governor within the Executive Department, of an Office of Economic Opportunity to administer the State's anti-poverty program, constitutes the major long-range step toward correcting many of the basic handicaps from which the migrants have suffered. The President's Economic Opportunity Act, as well as several other legislative measures enacted or amended in recent years, contain provisions especially designed to benefit migrant farm workers. At the present time the Texas Office of Economic Opportunity, under the general policy guidance of an Inter-Agency Committee for Economic Opportunity also recently appointed by the Governor, is working out high priority plans in the area of poverty elimination, with special emphasis on migrant laborers and their families. A number of specific programs and projects are well under way in various communities, and the number should increase greatly as experience is gained and their value becomes recognized by the communities.

Brief summaries of the major problem areas follow.

Education of the Children: Undoubtedly the one problem of greatest long-range importance in breaking the cycle of ignorance and vocational unpreparedness of the migrants is that of educating the children. Although some of the children of migrant families have, over the decades, remained in school and eventually acquired sufficient education to enter vocations requiring skill and knowledge, and a few have reached high educational levels, the great majority have not had this privilege. On the average, they find themselves unable to keep up with the other children after about the third or fourth year, so they drop out of school, and from then on accompany their parents throughout the yearly migrations. As they, in turn, reach maturity, they are prepared only for unskilled farm work, usually speak very little English, and thus are unable to enter any other vocational field.

Among the obstacles that in the past have frustrated any efforts on the part of others to induce the parents to keep their children in school, has been that of the economic necessity of their contributing to the meager earning of the parents. Even parents who would prefer to leave their children in school, usually contend that without these additional earnings, they would be even less able to pay their bills on returning to home base, make payments on their home or their car, etc.

Another basic obstacle is that of apathy on the part of parents toward education. The father is usually more inclined to be apathetic toward school than the mother. Being hard pushed to earn enough for even a subsistence living, and often never having been to school himself, he finds it easy to take the position that what's good enough for him, is good enough for his children. The mother is frequently more anxious to see her children receive an education, but under the patriarchal system of their class, she is unable to sway the father. There are also the additional obstacles posed by the strong disinclination of Latin families to split up, even for only a few months, and the difficulty of finding relatives or friends to care for the children at home base during the parents' absence.

As a step in the correction of this situation the 58th Legislature passed two bills designed to keep the migrant children in school. These laws amended the Child Labor law so as to extend its benefits to children hired in agriculture, who previously were exempted, and amended the Compulsory School Attendance law so as to require all school-age children to attend school for the entire

regular school term of the district in which they are located. The old law required only 120 days' attendance, and even this minimum was not commonly enforced insofar as the migrant children were concerned.

These laws became effective in August 1963, but compliance with their provisions can not yet be considered satisfactory. Much publicity has been given them in areas of heavy migrant population by the school authorities, interested State agencies, and civic organizations, and crew leaders and migrant parents have stated that they are generally aware of the laws. But informal checks with school authorities in several districts indicate that an average of only some 20 to 30 per cent more migrant children returned to school early in September of 1964 than was the case in prior years, and about the same percentage remained until school closed in 1965.

Thus, although compliance so far has not been sufficient to solve the problem, considerable good has been accomplished, and the trend may grow. Very probably there has also been an increase in the number of Texas children who make an effort to enroll in school in states to which they travel, in compliance with the Texas law.

During the Fall of 1963 the Texas Education Agency, on the recommendations of some 12 superintendents of South Texas school districts, instituted an experiment that has proved very successful and gratifying. It instituted intensive 6-months courses designed to meet the special needs of migrant children, and which would provide in six months approximately the same number of hours of instruction (1050) as are given in the regular 9 months schools. Initially these courses were set up in 5 districts, all located in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. At the time this is being written, the courses have been extended to and are operating in a total of 40 school districts in many areas of Texas, and plans envision their extension to other districts as soon as this can feasibly be done, and they are requested by the districts. At this time some 20,000 children are enrolled in these courses. A chart presenting data on the program is attached at the end of this section.

The reaction to these courses has been positive to a very gratifying degree, both on the part of the parents as well as the students, and registrations in many districts have considerably exceeded expectations. This is especially significant in view of the heavy work schedule: 8 hours of classes a day, 5 days a week,

with greatly curtailed holiday periods. But the courses allow the children to accompany their parents during about 6 months of the year, and achievement tests during the Summer of 1965 in selected subjects indicated that these children progressed at about the same rate as those in the regular courses.

Other states have shown considerable interest in this unique Texas experiment and are studying the possibility of adapting the curricula as well as the methods developed here, to similar courses in their areas. During the Summer of 1966, 24 selected teachers of the special courses will follow the migrants to their areas of employment in other states to provide continuity in the school program. In addition, special 6-weeks training institutes will be conducted during the Summer, for principals, teachers, and teacher aides preparing to teach these special migrant courses.

Funds for these and other similar programs will come from the Office of Economic Opportunity and Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Altogether, of the $20 million dollars of Federal Funds appropriated for migrant programs in the United States, Texas received some $6.7 million, of which about $3.3 million will be devoted to the education of the migrant children, and about $3.3 million to adult migrant education. These funds were allotted under Title III-B of the Economic Opportunity Act.

Mention should be made of the Pre-School Courses for Non-English Speaking children conducted during the Summer under Texas Minimum Foundation funds, as these courses are of inestimable value in preparing the pre-school age children for school later. About 20,000 children were enrolled in these courses last Summer, a high proportion of them being children of migrant or of seasonal farm worker families. Experience has shown that by and large, those children who have attended these courses full-time, have been able to assimilate satisfactorily the work of the first grades when they enter school, and to keep up with their primer-school class-mates.

TEXAS MIGRANT PROJECT SCHOOLS 1965-1966

School	COMPLETE SERVICES Grades	Est. # Students	ITINERANT SERVICES Grades	Est. # Students	Total Staff
Alton	1-6	150	1-6	150	19
Brownsville	1-9	348	1-8	110	27
Calallen			1-9	75	3
Carrizo Springs			1-9	450	18
Cotulla	1-9	362	7-12	45	26
Crystal City	1-8	890			43
Del Rio	1-6	200	1-8	225	18
Donna	1-6	630	1-12	502	30
Eagle Pass	1-9	816	1-9	230	61
Edcouch-Elsa	1-9	530	1-9	360	24
Edinburg	1-6	352	1-12	289	46
El Campo	1-8	60	1-8	40	14
Greg.-Portland			1-9	75	15
Harlingen	1-6	450	7-9	60	28
Hidalgo County	1-9	700			59
Hidalgo ISD	1-9	500			37
Laredo	1-6	300	1-6	300	17
Lasara			1-9	51	24
Los Fresnos			1-9	135	24
McAllen	1-9	949			71
Mercedes	1-9	585	1-12	360	37
Mission	1-6	600	1-12	200	48
Natalia	1-9	60	1-9	70	10
Odem			1-6	26	1
Pharr-San Juan Alamo	1-9	1899	1-12	210	98
Plainview			1-9	150	51
Poteet	1-9	140			23
Raymondville	1-6	351	1-9	800	11
Rio Grande City	1-8	510	1-12	235	40
Riverside ISD	1-6	151	6-9	44	10
Robstown	1-9	436	1-12	550	30
Roma			1-9	508	37
San Benito	1-9	506	1-12	77	40
San Felipe			1-9	250	13
San Marcos	1-9	150			61
Santa Rosa	1-9	150			28
Sinton			1-12	300	122
United Cons.			1-9	70	4
Waelder	1-9	104	9-12	8	7
Weslaco	1-9	630	1-9	190	46

NOTE: Courses average 6 mos. Opening & Closing Dates vary.

Education of Adults: It has been estimated that the average adult migrant has the equivalent of about a fourth-grade education many of them have had no formal schooling at all. Our Texas migrants, for the most part, also have a language handicap, and possess little, if any, skills other than in farm hand labor. Before any considerable number of them can be absorbed in industry or other non-farm employment, they must be afforded some general education in order that they will be able to absorb vocational training in appropriate skills. Although the problem is complex and no simple solution is possible, a comprehensive program carried out with funds now becoming available could, in time, reduce substantially the number of these illiterates, and enable them to absorb the training necessary to become employable in full-time farm work, or in non-agricultural vocations.

Employment Commission records indicate, for example, that in agriculture alone there are some thousands of unfilled full-time jobs requiring skills not now possessed by the average migrant. Small-scale programs of training in farm machinery operation have been conducted by the Texas Education Agency for the last several years under the Manpower Development and Training Act, but due to various technical difficulties, these have usually numbered only about 14 classes, averaging about 20 students, most of the classes being located in South Texas communities. High job placement rates among the graduates have, however, been reported.

More ambitious programs can be initiated in adult migrant education and vocational training under Title III-B of the Economic Opportunity Act, which is restricted to helping migrants only. As has been noted, funds of some $3.3 million dollars under this title have been made available for adult education of Texas migrants. At this time of writing some 3000 adults are enrolled in local school facilities by the Vocational Education Division of the Texas Education Agency.

In view of the fact that our migrant adults generally lack sufficient general education to be effectively trained for other vocations, and moreover in most cases do not know enough English to understand instruction, it has been apparent that they must be given a grounding in basic education before vocational training can be feasibly undertaken. Hence the 6-months courses are composed of 3 months Basic education, followed by 3 months Vocational training. Currently the latter program concentrates on 13 occupations, including those for women as well as for men.

Most of the schools are located in South Texas, where the migrants are concentrated. The principal criticism of the program by those who conduct it is that the time prescribed for completion is not sufficient to produce the results that could be obtained if some additional weeks could be devoted to this training. This is particularly true of the Basic course.

Besides the above training for adult migrants, it should be noted that many migrants or ex-migrants are also receiving education under the general program designed for all illiterates, for which funds are provided under Title II-B of the Economic Opportunity Act, and which are already in operation. For example, it is estimated that out of the roughly 60,000 students enrolled in the Basic education course under Title II-B, about 40 per cent, or 24,000, are migrants, or individuals who in the past have been migrants.

On the whole, therefore, several significant steps have been taken toward attacking the basic educational handicaps that, in the past, have operated to prevent the migrants from entering other occupations; steps which if continued, and if extended into other areas and communities where the migrants reside, can in time break the self-perpetuating cycle of ignorance and unemployability.

Day Care Centers: As a rule when the parents of migrant children are working in the fields, their small children and infants are either carried into the fields with them or are left in camp under the care of an elderly or infirm member of the family, or under the questionable care of older children of the family. When the family is staying in or near a labor camp it is usually not impossible to find someone who will, after a fashion, watch the children. But more often than not, "camp" is simply the truck or family car parked at the side of the field, or an old abandoned shack near the field.

In any case, it is a sad aspect to contemplate and a difficult situation to remedy, given the fact that the field work is often in rural areas far removed from towns or cities. Day care centers do exist at a few camps in areas where migrants work; they are usually organized and conducted by a few local church women, and have little in the way of facilities, and less in the way of financial support.

Because of this situation and the general lack of such health factors as sanitation, clean water, proper diet, and preventive medicine, the infant mortality rate from diarrhea and dysentery is very high among migrants. Nor do the children generally receive the kind of early care and training that is necessary to prepare them mentally and psychologically for school. At all conferences on the problems of migrant labor, the great need for day-care centers is frequently voiced by authorities on the subject.

Some planning by the interested State and Federal agencies has been done, and in time funds for a program of this nature may become available. But as of the moment, the many other projects and programs being undertaken are receiving first attention.

Housing at Labor Camps: There is no legal authority under which the State Department of Health can require certain standards of health and sanitation at farm labor camps, and the owners of such camps determine what facilities and precautions to maintain on their property. The result is that the adequacy of Texas labor housing varies greatly, ranging from excellent in some instances, to deplorable in others. In West Texas many camps are quite adequate, often having cement block houses, screens over doors and windows, approved water supply, metal chemical privies or indoor bathrooms, electricity and cooking heat, etc. But some of the worst housing encountered in various parts of the State, does not even have very minimum facilities and sanitation, with the result that the health of the workers and their families as well as that of the community itself is endangered.

The migrants consider proper housing one of the most important factors in deciding where to accept employment; they often report that housing in some areas in Texas is the worst they encounter in their migration.

The State Health Department has drawn up a guide for employers of migrants--"Suggested Health Standards for Migratory Labor Camps" --which it makes available to owners of migrant housing during their regular visits. But compliance with the suggested standards is voluntary, and the owner may or may not feel like following the suggestions. Since migrants sometimes stay only a few days or weeks in a particular camp, the owner may not feel that any considerable expense in repairing his facilities is warranted; but some minimal standards should be required if outbreaks of communicable diseases are to be avoided.

Legislation to give the Department of Health authority to prescribe and enforce minimum standards for migrant housing was introduced in the 56th, 57th, and 58th Legislatures, but to date such legislation has not been enacted. Federal financial assistance under F.H.A. criteria for the construction of proper labor housing has been made available, but has not generally been applied for. Hence this remains an area in which remedial action by the State would have a real and positive effect on the health of the farm labor force.

Transportation and Vehicle Safety: Every year there occur on Texas highways numerous serious accidents involving trucks that transport the migrant workers and their families; in many instances multiple fatalities result. In the first 10 months of a recent year, over 100 fatal and near-fatal accidents occurred involving migrant families; this was within Texas only. The principle causes of this situation are overcrowded trucks, inadequate safety devices on the vehicles, inexperienced drivers, unroadworthy vehicles, etc.

The Interstate Commerce Commission enforces its strict regulations for migrant trucks only if these vehicles cross out of Texas into other states, hence the hundreds of trucks and their crews that remain in Texas are not subject to any inspections nor to any standards other than those required for hauling cargo, despite the fact that the trucks are transporting passengers the same as a bus.

Bills to regulate the truck transportation of migrants were introduced in the 56th, 57th, and 58th Legislatures, but were not enacted into law. Since the migrant workers and families continue to be involved in many serious accidents year after year, endangering also the general travelling public, some minimum standards in this area are indicated.

Rest Stops: Migrants have long reported that while on the road they experience much difficulty in finding rest stops where the families can take baths, wash clothes, cook, and rest up between their long and uncomfortable trips. In some cases they need to stop for only a few hours; after a long days' travel they try to find an overnight stopping place. There are only a few reasonably adequate rest stops in Texas, and these are at widely scattered places. Since the camps are maintained by interested local civic groups and funds for them are scarce, there is considerable variation in the facilities offered. The better sites usually consist of a parking area for vehicles, a few shower baths, toilets or privies, laundry tubs, electric lights, and barbecue pits for cooking. Most of the rest stops are not this well equipped.

Migrants are not as a rule welcome to stop for any length of time at filling stations or roadside tourist travel centers, nor are these places adequate to their needs if the group is large. Along the routes most frequently travelled by the migrants, such rest stops as exist are frequently at great distances from each other; the families therefore, often simply spend the night along the side of the road, and they may do this several nights in succession; or they continue for hours beyond the safe driving endurance of the driver of the vehicle, to an out-of-state rest stop. A good example is the custom of crews and families migrating toward the Great Lakes area from South Texas: a large proportion of them annually try to continue their trip all the way through East Texas without stopping, to the camp at Hope, Arkansas, Northeast of Texarkana. Here for the first time since leaving home base they encounter adequate facilities for their needs.

The State, therefore, could provide a service that would be a real benefit to the families that follow the crops, by providing proper rest camps at carefully selected points on the usually travelled routes, all equipped with such basic facilities as would accommodate the needs of the migrants. There is, at present, no program at Federal level to carry out such projects under the Economic Opportunity Act, at least not in Texas.

Migrant Health Centers: One of the adverse aspects in our migrant labor system that has plagued it from the beginning was the fact that these families, while migrating, as a rule had no medical services available to them when sickness suddenly struck them while on the road. In such cases, if they happened to be near a city where a concerned local group took it upon itself to take the sick member to a local charity hospital or to a doctor who would take the case, they were fortunate. In the majority of cases, however, there was no local health organization with sufficient facilities or personnel to attend to the needs of the migrants, nor were funds generally available for such purposes. In many rural areas--the areas in which the migrants spend most of their time--there is often only one overworked doctor who is hard pushed to attend to his many regular patients.

Since 1962 Federal funds have been made available for the establishment of medical clinics or health centers for migrants under the Migrant Health Act and its subsequent amendments. Under this act local communities or multi-county areas, through a non-profit organization or groups, may apply for a grant, of which a portion of the monetary value must be furnished by the locality in the form of facilities, medical services, funds, or similar contribution. The health centers comprise one or more clinics at which some or all of the following services are available: inpatient medical care, outpatient medical care, dental care, health education, nurses, sanitarian, and technical assistance.

The centers are usually established in areas through which or near which pass the principal routes followed by the migrants; ideally the clinic is located near the convergence of several major migrant routes. The State Department of Health furnishes assistance in their establishment and provides general guidance and supervision in their operation. The number of such health centers approved and operating in Texas has grown steadily as communities have seen their very special value and benefit. By May of 1966 a total of 21 centers were either in operation (18) or were in the final stages of approval and establishment (3), involving funds of about $1.3 million.

Thus in the vital area of maintaining the health of migrant families while they are working and travelling all over our State, significant strides have been made. As knowledge of their contribution to the health of the community grows, and experience in their operation progresses, their extension to additional communities where they are strongly needed, can be anticipated.

TEXAS MIGRANT WORKERS-1965

SUMMARY OF DATA

GENERAL:

This short capitulation of the major statistics involved in the 1965 migration of Texas farm workers is presented in order to furnish those persons and agencies charged with planning programs designed to benefit this large segment of Texas labor, with numerical data that may assist them in their projects. Thus it is meant to supplement such other short studies as "Trends in Total Migration" in providing a ready, if concise, reference for understanding the magnitude of this annual movement of Texas families.

The year 1965, as has been mentioned elsewhere, was one of transition and fundamental change in our migrant stream. It had been anticipated that the termination of the Bracero Act on the last day of 1964 would create the incentive for improved wage rates in many areas and crops, and this, coupled with intensified recruiting of domestic labor, would cause more migrants to seek work on farms. The large increase in the migrant stream that actually took place surprised many, however, and indicates to what extent the competition from foreign imported labor had operated to reduce the number of our own migrants that could work profitably in the fields. The increases occurred in all categories, and ranged upwards from 18 per cent (unattached men) to 54 per cent (intrastate migrants), averaging almost 30 per cent over-all (See "Trends").

As in previous years some early groups migrated to Arizona, California, and Florida during February, but the great bulk of migrants commenced its travel out-of-state in April and May. A large number of families delayed their departure until after schools closed in May so as to be able to take their school-age children. This was true particularly among those families whose children attended the special courses for migrant children in 40 districts. Intensified recruitment by out-of-state recruiters caused 24 per cent more workers to migrate to other states than in 1964, while about 54 per cent more than in previous years worked only in Texas. Most of the interstate workers also worked at least some weeks in Texas, generally in West Texas upon their return.

Arrival at home bases in Texas commenced in September and continued until December. A large number returned in the first week in November so that the children could enter the special migrant schools opening in that month.

Home bases for the great majority of Texas migrants are located in South Texas from San Antonio to the Border and to the Gulf, with a heavy concentration in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (See "Principal Counties of Residence of Migrants"). About 95 per cent of Texas migrants are of Mexican extraction; a few hundred Negroes migrate out of East Texas.

T.E.C. Records on Interstate Migration:

According to T.E.C. records the 1965 out-of-state migration consisted of 7533 groups (crews and families). The total number of men, women, and children was 98,768. Of this number, 66,503 were workers. The 98,768 comprised 36,871 men 16 years of age and over, 27,329 women 16 and over, and 34,568 youths under 16. Families in the interstate stream numbered 14,089. There were 7464 unattached men and 1104 unattached women. Additionally the Texas Bureau of Labor Statistics has records on a little more than 40,000 workers recruited under B.L.S. regulations for out-of-state work in 1965. Probably about half of these are reflected in T.E.C. figures also, having been reported to T.E.C. by the Employment services of other states; and half can be added to the T.E.C. figure for workers. Thus the total number of out-of-state workers can be estimated at about 86,500. Using the above T.E.C. proportions, the total number of individuals, workers and non-workers, comes to approximately 128,500, interstate only.

As to the intrastate migration--those who worked entirely in Texas--there are, as mentioned, no very reliable figures on the numbers involved. The Texas Employment Commission estimated this group to have totalled about 26,000 workers; using the above proportions to determine the total number of persons involved, this figure increases to 38,600. Thus the total number of Texas migrants, interstate plus intrastate, men, women, and children, was about 167,000 in 1965. In 1964 this figure was 129,000.

SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN:

In 1965, assuming that the proportion of school-age children among the "youths under 16" was about the same as in previous years, about 31,500 migrated with their families. This figure represents only those who travelled on extended migration; the total number who missed substantial periods of school because of work in the fields was considerably higher. Many thousands work with their families, or by themselves, in fields located within commuting distance of their homes and are therefore not classified as "migrants", nor are they reflected in migrant statistics. Including these children, the figure might reach 50,000 or more.

The remaining 27,000 youths were infants and children under school age. As with the school-age children, the over-all total is considerably higher, as a large number of small children accompanied their parents to work within commuting distance of their homes and are thus not reflected in migrant statistics.

BREAKDOWN:

By using the proportions recorded by the T.E.C. for the Interstate migrants, the following over-all figures, suitable for practical planning purposes, are arrived at:

Total individuals, Interstate plus Intrastate ..	167,000
Men 16 years of age and over	62,300
Women 16 and over	46,300
Youths under 16	58,400
School Age youths	31,500
Families (total in crews and as separate units)	23,700
Unattached men	12,500
Unattached women	1,900
Work groups (crew leaders and family heads)	12,730
Size of families while migrating	6.4*

*Average number of members on migration. Many families leave their school-age children at home base in the care of relatives or close friends. Thus while at home base, families are considerably larger.

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TRENDS IN MIGRATION

1964-1965

The trend during 1965 that overshadowed all others is, of course, the large increase in the number of migrants in the stream. Taking advantage of the more favorable conditions for domestic workers that resulted from the termination of the Bracero Act, and spurred by intensive recruiting efforts by the Employment Commission and by out-of-state labor agents, the total number of individuals in interstate and intrastate travel increased to 167,000 -- about 38,000 more than in 1964. The increase occurred in all categories: men, women, youths, families, etc.

The largest single increase, by per cent, occurred in the intrastate stream, reversing the previous trend. In 1964 this group had diminished to 25,000, but in 1965 it increased 54 per cent to an estimated 38,600 men, women, and children.

The total out-of-state migration increased 24%, to 128,500 individuals. This trend may well continue through the 1966 season as out of state recruiters, particularly from states formerly using many Braceros, such as California and Michigan, flock to Texas to fill their labor needs from the nation's largest source of surplus domestic farm labor. In 1965 there was not sufficient family-type housing in most states--particularly California--to accommodate all the people needed. Extensive construction in 1965 and 1966 will greatly increase the available quarters and thus also contribute to a larger out-of-state migration.

The trend toward an increase in the number of children migrating with their families continued in 1965. Youths under 16 increased 27 per cent to 58,400, while of that group those of school age increased 26 per cent to 31,500. These figures represent only those on extended migration, and do not include those travelling within commuting distance of their homes. The increase was in part the result of the short 6-months' courses for migrant children that operated in many South Texas districts, which enabled school children to accompany their parents from the end of May until the first week of November. During 1966 some 40 districts operate these courses, which will probably result in a further increase in this category during this year's season.

Over the last several years there has existed a trend toward the use of private cars rather than trucks, the proportions of cars among the total number of vehicles rising from 58% in 1956 to 72% in 1964. In 1965 the proportion remained at 64 per cent. This is believed due to the fact that California labor agents transported some thousands of workers to California and back in buses. Migrant families continue to prefer to travel as units in private cars whenever possible.

The average size of families while on migration remained at 6.4 members, the same as in 1964. This figure should be used with discretion, as it does not represent the average size of the immediate family of husband, wife, and children. In many instances parents, brothers, or sisters of the husband or wife accompany them and are included in the family, while one or more school-age sons or daughters are left in school at home base and are not counted.

TABULATION:

Total Individuals	1965	167,000	
	1964	129,000	
		38,000	30% Increase
Total Interstate	1965	128,500	
	1964	104,000	
		24,500	24% Increase
Total Intrastate	1965	38,600	
	1964	25,000	
		13,600	54% Increase
Families	1965	23,700	
	1964	18,300	
		5,400	30% Increase
Men 16 and Over	1965	62,300	
	1964	48,000	
		14,300	30% Increase
Women 16 and Over	1965	46,300	
	1964	35,000	
		11,300	32.3% Increase
Youths under 16	1965	58,400	
	1964	46,000	
		12,400	27% Increase
School-Age Youths	1965	31,500	
	1964	25,000	
		6,500	26% Increase
Unattached Men	1965	12,500	
	1964	10,600	
		1,900	18% Increase
Unattached Women	1965	1,900	
	1964	1,600	
		300	19% Increase
Size of Families While Migrating	1964	6.4 Members	
	1965	6.4 Members	

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MECHANIZATION AND THE TEXAS MIGRANT

1965

With the termination of the Bracero Act, and the consequent impossibility of securing any noteworthy numbers of Mexican laborers in the future, farmers in all states that have in the past depended on this labor have given increased attention to the use of machinery in all crops lending themselves to mechanization. A rapid increase in machine harvesting had already taken place before 1965 in a number of crops, principal of which were cotton, sugar beets, potatoes, snap beans, etc. Currently, intensive efforts are being made to adapt the machine to certain other vegetables that heretofore have not lent themselves readily to mechanization, such as tomatoes and lettuce.

In Texas the greatest single crop is cotton, which in the past traditionally gave work to over 100,000 domestic workers, as well as many thousands of alien workers from Mexico. Not only were many more workers employed annually in cotton than in the other crops, they were employed for longer periods of time, as the season progressed from early cotton picking in South Texas in June, to the end of the pulling season in West Texas in late December and January.

Texas cotton farmers, anticipating the day when Braceros would no longer be available as shock troops in the fields, started converting to machine harvesting several years ago. Thus the gradual annual reduction in the number of Braceros allowed to enter, and the final termination of Public Law 78 on December 31, 1964, found Texas growers relatively well prepared to carry on without them. An unfortunate corollary of this development was, however, that it affected our domestic migrants as well, depriving them of their major field of agricultural employment and income at the very time when they might have expected to gain the benefits resulting from the elimination of competition from the alien labor. In cotton, therefore, it is doubtful that Texas migrants derived any great benefit from the termination of Public Law 78, as they did in vegetable crops.

A few figures should be included to illustrate the rapid increase in cotton mechanization. During the middle 1950's about 25 per cent of Texas cotton was machine harvested, and most of this occurred in West Texas where "stripping" by machine was feasible, given the storm-proof type of plant grown there. By 1962 over 70

per cent of all Texas cotton was mechanized, and in 1965 about 91 per cent of the harvest was mechanized. One authoritative source puts this figure at 94 per cent. This probably represents about the maximum potential for machine work, as there will always be a few areas in which the weather happens to preclude the use of machines at harvest time. And even when the weather is right for machine harvesting, many growers prefer to give their crop an initial going over by hand labor in order to catch the first picking. The attached sheet tabulates the extent of machine harvesting by region, over the last four years.

Most mechanical harvesting is done by "stripping" machines, of which there are now over 45,000 in the State. Stripping originally was confined largely to West Texas, where, as mentioned before, the variety of cotton planted lent itself to this kind of operation. Over the last few years, however, many growers in the other sections of Texas have gone in for stripping, preferring this simpler, less expensive operation to the use of the more complicated and expensive picking machine. There are, nevertheless, about 6500 picking machines in use in Texas, most of them located in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and in the Upper and Lower Coastal Bend. Whether cotton is machine stripped or machine picked, the cost per bale is substantially lower than the cost by hand labor.

In past years the quality of machine harvested cotton, and thus its price, was somewhat lower than that of hand-picked cotton; but improvements in gin machinery and the use of special cleaners has greatly reduced the disparity. This, in turn, has increased the demand for machines in all regions of Texas, so that now, in addition to the machines owned in Texas, many are moved in from other states such as Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas. In 1964, of the total Texas production of 4,080,000 bales, about 3,509,000 were machine harvested. This represents about 3,930,000 man-weeks of hand labor. In 1965 the total production was about 4,630,000 bales, of which some 4,200,000 were machine harvested, representing about 4,700,000 man-weeks of hand labor. Thus the machine displaced the hand labor of about 290,000 workers last year.

Vegetables: Insofar as the mechanical harvesting of vegetables is concerned, there has been noteworthy progress only in regard to certain vegetables. On the whole, the machine has taken over much more slowly here than in cotton for two reasons: the difficulty of adapting the machine to many kinds of vegetables (or conversely, developing the kind of plant that can be handled by the machine), and because of the existence of surpluses of hand labor in some areas of vegetable production, such as the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

At the present early stage in the mechanization of vegetables, it has been estimated that machine harvesting displaces some 6000 workers annually, although reliable figures are not available. The following list indicates the extent of machine harvesting of some of the principal crops in 1965:

Spinach (Canning only. Fresh market all by hand)	100 per cent
Beets (Sugar beets. Table beets by hand)	100 per cent
Beans (Bush beans. Pole beans by hand)	75 per cent
Carrots	25-50 per cent

The rapid increase in machine harvesting of all kinds of crops in the other states as well as in Texas has made it increasingly difficult for our Texas migrants to find steady employment during the crops season. For the moment, the termination of the Bracero Act and the consequent rises in wage rates in many areas, coupled with intensive recruitment efforts by out-of-state recruiters and by the Texas Employment Commission, are the principal reasons for the large increase in the number of workers who migrated in 1965. During the current (1966) season the competition for labor will be even stronger, and thus the number of workers migrating will probably again increase.

But it is only a question of time until mechanization will replace hand labor in most harvesting operations in most areas of the nation. Since the migrant workers are not generally skilled in other work and can not, as a rule, secure employment in industry or the services, they will become unemployed in large numbers. This will become a serious problem to the communities in South Texas where they have their homes, as the communities will be entirely unable to cope with the large concentration of unemployed and underemployed with which they will be faced. It is this outlook that prompts the urgency underlying the establishment of the various migrant programs of the War on Poverty, and their extension into many communities of heavy migrant population in Texas where they have not yet been initiated.

MECHANIZATION IN TEXAS COTTON HARVEST

1965

Region	1962 Percent	1963 Percent	1964 Percent	1965 Percent
Northern Panhandle	85	93	95	95
High Plains	70	83	90	94
El Paso-Pecos	99	79	82	86
Winter Garden-San Antonio	78	85	85	88
Central Texas	82	92	90	94
Cross Timbers-East Texas	70	76	85	87
Edwards Plateau	60	82	85	86
Brazos River Valley	69	61	85	89
Upper & Lower Coastal Bend	65	73	70	92
Lower Rio Grande Valley	90	90	95	98
	70	81	86	91

Notes:

a. Total Texas production, 1965, was about 4,630,000 bales.

b. Percentages over 90 represent about the maximum potential for machine harvesting.

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STATES IN WHICH TEXAS MIGRANTS WORKED

1965

Figures represent total number of people--men, women, and children--on whom records were kept in the Texas Employment Commission or the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Most of them worked in several states successively. To these figures on "known" migrants may be added about 8 per cent to cover "free wheelers" who migrated without contacting either department.

Alabama	---	2,438	Montana	---	5,533
Arizona	---	268	Nebraska	---	6,314
Arkansas	---	542	Nevada	---	19
* California	---	9,342	New Mexico	---	248
Colorado	---	8,136	New York	---	6
Delaware	---	71	North Dakota	---	2,854
Florida	---	2,099	Ohio	---	25,776
Georgia	---	16	Oklahoma	---	2,000
Idaho	---	14,450	Oregon	---	5,807
Illinois	---	12,326	South Carolina	---	166
Indiana	---	11,397	South Dakota	---	382
Iowa	---	2,256	Tennessee	---	1,539
Kansas	---	1,126	Utah	---	2,130
Kentucky	---	243	Virginia	---	403
Louisiana	---	357	Washington	---	4,066
Michigan	---	31,681	Wisconsin	---	16,357
Minnesota	---	8,795	Wyoming	---	4,367
Mississippi	---	119			
Missouri	---	511			

Total number of states: 36

The nine leading states in the use of Texas migrants were as follows:

Michigan	---	31,681
Ohio	---	25,776
Wisconsin	---	16,357
Idaho	---	14,450
Illinois	---	12,326
Indiana	---	11,397
California	---	9,342
Minnesota	---	8,795
Colorado	---	8,136

*Comprises 3,322 recorded by T.E.C. plus 6,020 singles sent out under B.L.S. licensing.

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PRINCIPAL COUNTIES OF RESIDENCE OF MIGRANTS

Workers Only - Estimated - 200 or more:

Outside Rio Grande Valley --

Bexar	8,000
Nueces	5,000
Webb	5,000
Maverick	4,400
Zavala	4,000
San Patricio	2,000
Travis	1,200
Dimmit	1,000
Uvalde	1,000
Valverde	1,000
LaSalle	800
McLennan	800
Jim Wells	700
El Paso	600
Kleberg	600
Brooks	500
Frio	500
Medina	500
Williamson	500
Atascosa	400
Caldwell	400
Hale	400
Harris	400
Hays	400
Karnes	400
Lubbock	400
Wilson	400
Zapata	400
Bell	300
Bowie	300
Duval	300
Bee	200
Dallas	200
Gonzales	200
Guadalupe	200
Hockley	200
Tarrant	200
Victoria	200
	44,000

Total Outside Rio Grande Valley		44,000
Lower Rio Grande Valley --		
Hidaldo - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	25,000	
Cameron - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	10,000	
Starr - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	2,200	
Willacy - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	2,000	
		39,200
In addition, approximately 40 counties have fewer than 200 resident migrant workers; these total about 3,500		3,500
TOTAL		86,700

NOTE:

a. Numbers comprise workers recorded by Texas Employment Commission or recruited under Bureau of Labor Statistics regulations, plus estimated "free wheelers" in counties of heavy concentration.

b. Figures revised as of May 1966.

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MIGRANT LABOR LEGISLATION

INTRODUCED IN THE 58th AND 59th LEGISLATURES

58th Legislature:

Five bills were introduced on Migrant Labor that were similar to those introduced in the 57th Legislature and 56th Legislature. These bills concerned Child Labor (introduced in both House and Senate), Compulsory School Attendance (introduced in House and Senate), Transportation Safety (introduced in House only), Crew Leader Licensing (introduced in Senate only), and Labor Camp Housing (introduced in Senate only).

In addition, 6 new bills, concerning Education for Adult Migrants and Illiterates and prepared by the Texas Education Agency, were introduced in identical versions in both House and Senate. No similar bills had been introduced in previous Legislatures.

The majority of migrant bills were not reported out of committee or voted on in either the House or Senate. However, as a result of the studies and hearings which the House Interim Committee on Migrant Labor (Kennard Committee) had conducted during the interim between the 57th and 58th Legislatures, the 58th Legislature was provided with a much clearer understanding of the problems and needs of our Texas migrants. As a consequence, two of the bills which have been regarded as among the most urgently needed pieces of corrective legislation--the Child Labor and Compulsory School Attendance Bills--were enacted into law. Similarly, funds were appropriated in the Appropriations Bill to finance a study project for the education of adult migrants (and other illiterates) in order to facilitate their entry into other vocations. However, local matching funds for this project did not materialize, and the study was dropped.

The details of the actions taken on the various migrant labor bills in the House and in the Senate follow.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H.B. 165--Child Labor Law--de la Garza (same as S.B. 408). Amends the Child Labor laws to provide a minimum of fourteen (14) years of age in regard to work permits issued by a county judge to a child whose earnings are necessary to a family in needy circumstances, and provides for the procedure in establishing the need. Provides for repeal of language that expressly excludes children hired in agricultural work from the provisions of the child labor laws, but retains other previous exceptions, and provides for an exception to cover the employment at farm work of a farmer's children.

Referred to Criminal Jurisprudence Committee. Was passed by Senate on April 9, 1963; signed by the Governor on May 30, 1963; became effective August 23, 1963.

H.B. 331--School Attendance Law--Markgraf. (Same as S.B. 409). Provides that every child who is seven (7) years and not more than sixteen (16) years of age to attend public school for the entire regular school term in the district of its residence or in some other district to which it may be transferred as provided by law. Act exempts high school graduates, and does not affect the exceptions for students at private schools, nor alter previous provisions for enforcement.

Referred to Education Committee. Was passed by Senate on May 21, 1963, was signed by the Governor on June 5, 1963, and became effective on August 23, 1963.

H.B. 401--Transportation Safety--Townsend. Provides for safety standards, devices, and procedures for the transportation of migrant farm workers and their families by truck within the State. Generally similar to the Interstate Commerce Commission regulations now governing the interstate transportation of migrants. Provides for enforcement and establishes penalties for violations.

Referred to Motor Traffic Committee. No open hearings held. Was not reported out of committee.

H.B. 791--Education for Adult Illiterates--Ligarde.
(Same as S.B. 405)

H.B. 792--Education for Adult Illiterates--Ligarde.
(Same as S.B. 403)

H.B. 793--Education for Adult Migrant Agricultural Workers--Ligarde.
(Same as S.B. 404)

H.B. 794--Education for Adult Migrant Agricultural Workers--Ligarde.
(Same as S.B. 406)

H.B. 795--Education of Adults--Ligarde.
(Same as S.B. 402)

H.B. 796--Education for Adult Migrant Agricultural Workers--Ligarde.
(Same as S.B. 407)

These 6 Bills were referred to the Appropriations Committee. Open hearing was held on April 29, 1963. No further action taken on the Bills, but the Committee recommended $30,000 for the biennium for a study project on the education of adult illiterates. Project to be conducted at Texas Southmost College, Brownsville.

SENATE

S.B. 408--Child Labor Law--Kennard. (Same as H.B. 165)

Referred to Jurisprudence Committee. No hearings held, but Senate passed H.B. 165 when same was referred to it.

S.B. 409--School Attendance Law--Kennard (Same as H.B. 331)

Referred to Jurisprudence Committee. No hearings held, but Senate passed H.B. 331 when same was referred to it.

S.B. 410--Crew Leader Licensing--Kennard. Provides for licensing and registration of crew leaders by the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, so they may have legal responsibilities toward the workers recruited by them, the employers, and the public. Sets minimum standards governing their operation, lists prohibited acts, and provides for enforcement and sets penalties for violations.

Referred to Finance Committee. No hearings were held; bill not reported out of committee.

S.B. 411--Labor Camp Housing--Kennard. Authorizes the State Department of Health to adopt rules and regulations to govern housing facilities for migrant farm workers and protect the health, safety, and welfare of workers living therein; provides for issuance of permits for construction and operation of such facilities, sets forth fees, and provides for inspection, enforcement, and penalties for violations.

Referred to Jurisprudence Committee. No hearings were held; Bill was not reported out of committee.

S.B. 402--Education for Adults--Kennard (Same as H.B. 795)

S.B. 403--Education for Adults--Kennard (Same as H.B. 792)

S.B. 404--Education for Adult Migrant Agricultural Workers--Kennard. (Same as H.B. 793)

S.B. 405--Education for Adult Migrant Agricultural Workers--Kennard. (Same as H.B. 791)

S.B. 406--Education for Adult Migrant Agricultural Workers--Kennard. (Same as H.B. 794)

S.B. 407--Education for Adult Migrant Agricultural Workers--Kennard. (Same as H.B. 796)

These 6 Bills referred to Finance Committee. Open hearing was held on April 23, 1963. No further action was taken on the Bills, but Senate, in passing Appropriations Bill, appropriated $30,000 for the study project for the education of adults, referred to above. The study was never initiated.

59th Legislature:

Only one piece of legislature primarily having to do with migrant labor was introduced in the 59th Legislature. This was Senate Bill 179 (House Bill 96), to consolidate the Texas Council on Migrant Labor with the Texas Good Neighbor Commission. The Senate Bill passed the Senate on February 15 and the House on April 7, and was signed by the Governor on April 22, 1965.

The merger, which became effective on September 1, 1965, places the functions of the Migrant Labor Council in the Good Neighbor Commission and provides an additional staff position with the title "Coordinator of Migrant Labor." The law thereby abolished the "ex-officio" membership of the Council, comprising the heads of seven State departments. The Migrant Council had long held the view that the "ex-officio" principle of Council membership was awkward, and should be replaced by a commission. The Good Neighbor Commission is such an agency.

One other piece of legislation, not in general a "migrant labor" bill, affects migrants through one of its provisions. Senate Bill No. 130, enacted into law by the 59th Legislature, transfers all tuberculosis hospitals from the State Board of Hospitals and Special Schools to the State Health Department. Section 6 of the law provides that all migratory workers shall furnish a certificate attesting that the worker has been examined for tuberculosis, to the labor agent licensed by the Commissioner of Labor Statistics. Violation of the provision constitutes grounds for revocation of the labor agent's license.

MIGRANT LABOR

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ANNUAL WORKER PLAN:
The plan under which representatives of the Texas Employment Commission recruit and schedule interstate migrant agricultural workers to a series of successive employments in agriculture throughout their migration, including their return to Texas.
(The purpose of the plan is to assure maximum employment throughout the year for the migrant workers).

BRACERO:
Alien Mexican field-hand employed on a contract basis in agricultural labor in the United States, under terms and guarantees agreed to between the United States and Mexico, and enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor under Public Law 78.
(Adult male laborers are transported into the U.S. to work in a specified crop area for a specific period of time. They are never accompanied by women or children. They are returned to Mexico upon completion of the contract. Although limited numbers of aliens of other nationalities are also imported annually, the term "bracero" refers only to the Mexican national. In some areas the braceros are colloquially called "nationals").

CREW:
A group of migrant farm workers travelling as a unit under the control and direction of one of their number (crewleader). A crew usually includes some relatives and friends of the crewleader, and in many cases comprises entire families -- men, women, and children.
(Texas crews may vary in size from a small family of a few members travelling in the family car, to several hundred travelling in trucks and cars. Most crews number from 20 to 30 persons.)

CREWLEADER (CREW CHIEF):
A person who solicits or recruits migrant farm workers, transports and personally accompanies such workers during their migration, and acts as their spokesman or agent in dealing or negotiating with employers concerning terms of employment, wages, and working conditions.
(Our Texas crewleaders perform a variety of other services for the members of their crews).

DAY HAUL:
The transportation of local seasonal agricultural workers on a day to day basis between their employment and their own permanent home or residence.

DAY HAUL RECRUITER:
Any person who solicits or recruits, and transports, local agricultural workers on a day-to-day basis between their employment and their permanent home or residence.

EMPLOYER:
As here used, the term "employer" means any person, firm, association, or cooperative group employing the services of migrant agricultural workers, including the first processing of agricultural products.

FREE-WHEELERS:
Migrants who do not contact an office of the Texas Employment Commission before migrating, but migrate entirely on their own responsibility.
(Many free-wheelers follow an itinerary on which they return to certain employers for whom they have worked in previous years, and with whom they maintain contact during the off season).

INTERSTATE MIGRATION:
That portion of the migration that moves from Texas to other states in search of employment.
(During the last few years Texas migrants migrated to about 36 other states. A large number of these also worked at least some weeks in Texas, usually in cotton in West Texas upon their return. The interstate migration comprised about 80 per cent of our total number of migrants in 1964.

INTRASTATE MIGRATION:
That portion of the migrants who remain entirely within Texas during their migration.
(This portion comprised about 20 per cent of the total number in 1964.)

LABOR AGENT (LABOR CONTRACTOR):

Under Texas law, a "labor agent" is a person who, for a fee or without a fee, procures employment for common or agricultural workers for employers, or supplies the services of common or agricultural workers to any person.

(In Texas, migrant crew leaders are not considered to be labor agents, in the legal sense intended, and hence are not subject to registration and licensing under our Texas Labor Law, nor to payment of the various taxes and fees required of the latter. The law primarily affects out-of-State contractors who recruit farm labor in Texas).

MIGRANT (Also MIGRANT LABORER: MIGRANT FARM WORKER: MIGRANT AGRICULTURAL WORKER: MIGRATORY WORKER: DOMESTIC MIGRANT):

A seasonal farm worker who is a U.S. citizen and who performs his labor at such distance from his permanent home that he cannot return to his home at night, but must be quartered in the area of his employment.

(The term "migrant" usually refers to the migrant agricultural, rather than industrial worker, and includes members of the worker's family who accompany him).

MIGRATION:

As used here, migration is the annual or seasonal travel of migrants as they follow the crops. Harvesting the crops forms the principal employment, but extensive employment is also found in cultivating activities in various crop areas throughout the Nation and the State.

WETBACK:

Mexican national who enters the United States illegally in search of agricultural work.

(At one time wetbacks entered the U.S. in such large numbers that they constituted a serious problem. Since establishment of the Bracero program, under which Mexicans can enter legally and perform farm work, the wetbacks have decreased in number until today the problem is no longer serious).